



interchange

peace

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In This Issue

[Peace Lanterns](#)

[Pax Christi](#)

[A Person of Peace](#)

[Peace Vigils](#)

[A Special Connection](#)

[Recognizing S. Mary Brigh](#)

[A Place of Peace and
Reflection](#)

[Ministries of Peace](#)

Quick Links

[View Our Web Site](#)

[Join our list](#)

[Join Our Mailing List!](#)

Dear Friends and Family,

Make me an instrument of your peace...

Attributed to St. Francis of Assisi, this statement resonates with the Rochester Franciscans as they go about their daily lives and practice their ministries. In a world of chaos and disorder, there is comfort in knowing that efforts are being made by so many Sisters and Cojourners as they work for peace and justice. As you read the following examples, may you not only be comforted, but also inspired to do the same.

Kathy Gatliff

Editor

Director of Communications

Sisters of Saint Francis - Rochester, MN

Peace Lantern Floating Ceremony - by Sister Marlys Jax

On August 6, 2013, Silver Lake, Rochester, MN, will become a "silvery pool of flickering lights," as an atmosphere of contemplation and tranquility pervades the night air. Against the backdrop of the setting sun, hundreds of cube-shaped, white paper lanterns will float silently with the wind. Messages of peace, images of loss, or the horrors of nuclear weapons are inscribed on the windows of the lanterns. The wind-whipped dancing lights project a kaleidoscope of colors... while sending wishes and prayers in every faith tradition to the people of Japan, and the rest of the world, who work for a lasting peace. Each light is meant to be an "ancestral angel" to remember and lead the soul of those who died in those waters to heaven.



Sixty-eight years ago, on August 6, 1945, Hiroshima was hit by an atomic bomb dropped by our own U.S.A. It was to the waters of the Ohta River in Hiroshima that tens of thousands fled seeking shelter from the flames. On that day, a single blast lit the landscape in which 210,000+ people eventually died of the burns. Because of this tragic event, many cities around the world, including Rochester, MN, float lanterns annually on this day, in solidarity with Japanese people, as a way to announce our care for the human loss and the environmental disaster, while offering a sincere desire for peace today. We remember those Hiroshima/Nagasaki events to remind ourselves that we are capable of destroying or preventing the destruction of our world's civilizations. The choice is ours!

In 1984, Lucille Kuhl, a member of Pax Christi Peace Group in Rochester, read an article in the *St. Anthony Messenger* about Japanese Lantern Floating. Inspired, she went to her neighborhood creek to determine if her homemade lantern floated. It did! The following year, after witnessing 1000 lanterns floating on the Mississippi in La Crosse, WI, she returned determined to set the lantern light ablaze on Rochester's lake. The local Pax Christi Peace group - a faithful group of Sisters and lay folk - took on the planning of the event. Twenty-eight years later, the ceremony lives on! And, as they say the rest is history.

Today, lanterns are set to sail to the drum beat of Native American Omni drummers. This year's planners include: Sister Iria Miller, Judy and Alan Hoffman, along with Junko Maruta, one of many Japanese residents. They will gather on Tuesday evening, August 6, 2013 to say "never again." Do come!

Please note: In the event of rain, the lantern float will be re-scheduled for Thursday evening, August 8.

The International Catholic Peace Movement - by S. Ann Redig

The Pax Christi organization is one of the best kept secrets for Catholics and Christians who are committed to share Jesus' message of peace to our troubled world. Pax Christi (www.paxchristi.net), the International Catholic Peace Movement, began in 1945 following WWII. It was started by French and German Catholics in France, who prayed for forgiveness, reconciliation and peace. This movement soon spread across Europe.

Pax Christi USA (www.paxchristiusa.org) began in 1972, striving to create a world that reflects the Peace of Christ - peace through justice. There are over 400 local groups throughout the U.S., including 50 college and high school chapters. Many bishops, parishes and religious communities, including Rochester Franciscans, are members.

As we strive for the peace of Christ in our lives and witness the call of Christian nonviolence, it behooves us to join in a community devoted to such a task. Having the opportunity to share our desires, as well as present life experiences, gives support to making a daily commitment for peace, as well as hope for the future. We are very aware of living peacefully in our present world.

The local Pax Christi group in Rochester, MN, formed following the dynamic National Pax Christi Assembly held at Assisi Heights in 1982. We also celebrated the 800th birthday of Francis of Assisi. Pax Christi's theme, "Violence Ends Where Love Begins," remains the primary motto; reflecting Pax Christi's four priorities: Spirituality of Nonviolence and Peacemaking; Disarmament, Demilitarization and Reconciliation with Justice; Economic and Interracial Justice in the U.S.; and Human Rights and Global Restoration.

Today, the Rochester Pax Christi group of 12 meets for study, conversation and support on the third Tuesday evening of each month at Assisi Heights. Rochester Franciscan members include: Sisters Ann Redig, Iria Miller and Marlys Jax, and Cojourner Marty Cormack. Our lively discussions come from using study books: From Violence to Wholeness, The Way of Peace, and presently, The Challenge of Peace. This year we will celebrate the 50th anniversary of Pope John XXIII's *Pacem in Terris*, as well as the 20th anniversary of the U.S. Bishops Pastoral, The Challenge of Peace, as noted in our reading list above.



Rochester Franciscan members of Pax Christi, l to r: S. Ann Redig, S. Marlys Jax, Cojourner Marty Cormack and S. Iria Miller.

Minnesota members hold an annual Pax Christi conference (www.paxchristimn.org), which rotates amongst the five Minnesota group locations: Crookston, Duluth, Minneapolis/St. Paul, Rochester and St. Cloud. This year's conference will be held on September 21 in Duluth. Our keynote is by Edwina Gately, with the theme: "Rebuilding: Our Journey - A Journey with Vatican II: From Liberation to Grief, to Resistance, to Rejoicing."

Feel free to contact any of the Rochester Franciscans listed above for more information. Visit the websites for amazing information about this extended local and global peace community. We hope you will join us!

A Person of Peace by Sister Christine Stanoch

Being a person of peace is a lifelong goal for me. As I reflect on the times I have met other persons of peace, one man stands out for me. It was a long time ago when I met Ken Feit, a former Jesuit. He had come to Assisi Heights to present a three-day workshop on clowning. If you met Ken during that workshop, you would have been struck by his attentiveness to life, its mystery, wonderment, compassion... and his peaceful presence. He was masterful about the lessons he taught. These lessons were frequently shared by example, and not in a long presentation. Each one of the frames of his presentation, which could definitely be a PowerPoint slideshow in today's world, would capture a simple event in ordinary life, presented in an extraordinary way. An example of this was the time he sat on the floor in silence, lit a candle, took a large spoon and filled it with cooking oil. He placed a kernel of corn in the oil and waited until a piece of popcorn emerged. The expression on his face was priceless - his eyes wide with wonder. And we, the audience, sat in silence and awe. The tools of his trade were ordinary things. He had refined his craft, and yet, when the popcorn flower emerged, he appeared to be filled with wonder. I have never forgotten him.



In fact, when I think the problems of the world, and things in my life seem impossible to manage, I often flash back to that moment. I then regain some hope that ordinary people, with extraordinary trust and hope, can change the world.

Ken was also into Haiku poetry. He would act as he recited each Haiku poem. One performance, in particular, came back to me when I worked in the pastoral care department of the College of St. Teresa. We had a group of student storytellers who were invited to a peace rally at the band shell at Lake Winona. During that same time, a film was shown on TV about Hiroshima. At the end of the movie, a Haiku appeared on the screen. It was the same Haiku that Ken Feit had used on that very same weekend. It makes a lot of sense when you think about destruction created by wars and other disasters. In these simple words, there is a vision for humanity that really could help us change the course of history and encourage us all to become ambassadors of peace. It is, as follows:

Since my house burned down

I have a clearer view

Of the rising Moon.

Peace Vigil Alive! by Sister Mary Kay Flanigan

None of us ever knows what is going to surprise us, alert us and deepen our commitment to social justice issues. The 8th Day Center began as a coalition of people from Chicago and the surrounding suburbs who met one week after the horrific events of 9/11/2001. They met at the Federal Building in Chicago for a **Peace - Not War** rally, on the morning of Tuesday, September 18, 2001. What we did not know was that we would still be doing the same thing almost 12 years later! We are there through snow, sleet and rain, except for two weeks over Christmas - New Year holidays, or if a severe storm or blizzard is forecast.

We hold large-print colorful signs. And, for 10 of those years, we gave out 1,000 fliers at each vigil to share information with alternative press sites, and suggested actions. Students and interns participate, too; assisting with sign and flyer creation. Each week, staff in each of the Senators' offices received our flyers - one for the Chicago office, and one is sent to their Washington, D.C. office. Each vigil ends with the circle prayer with motions: Peace Before Us, Peace Behind Us, etc. Some of our signs read: *War is Preposterous, STOP the DRONES, War leaves all children behind.*



Some people passing by on their way to work conversed freely, agreed with our signs, and soon became friends. Other people were angry we were there, and let us know by derogatory statements or facial expressions. And yet, others were totally indifferent. Over the years, we have even become friends with the Federal Officers on duty!

When the Occupy Movement burst on the scene two years ago, we joined them at the Federal Bank and the Board of Trade building. We focused on the economic aspects of war and poverty, and corporate connections. We continue to appear with our signs, and, on occasion, share alternative press flyers. We sense that people are friendlier at these new locations.

Now, Occupy has moved on to different sites, and our coalition has decided to use the summer to alternate our vigil between the Federal Building, and the Board of Trade and the Federal Bank. In the fall, we will discern the best place to continue our vigils. Our coalition has people of many different ages and from many walks of life. Our oldest coalition member, Betty, is now 96 years old. She came every week for the first 11 years, and now is present through her spirit and other contacts. We have enjoyed the vigils, and the challenges. The bonds among coalition members have grown, as has our courage, and commitment to Peace and No War.

Revealing a Special Connection to a Place of Sanctuary and Peace

You can run into some pretty fascinating folks at Mayo Clinic just by walking around campus. Someone who may look like just another visitor may very well turn out to be, say, a walking, talking part of Mayo Clinic history. Just ask friend of *In the Loop*, John Murphy, who met up with just such a person the other day, as he's wont to do.

Murphy recently ran into an old college friend who was visiting Rochester, from Kansas, on business. As they talked, Murphy learned that his old friend, Thomas W. Graves, was the great-grandson of Edward Joseph Graves Sr., the man who helped build the first permanent chapel at Saint Marys Hospital. Graves had never been to Rochester or seen the chapel, but "he'd heard stories about it for years," Murphy says. So Murphy, who may have missed his calling as a tour guide, brought his friend to see the chapel.

As the story goes, Edward Graves Sr. was hired by the Sisters of Saint Francis in 1903 to build the chapel at Saint Marys because of his reputation for excellence in "intricate church construction." After a few weeks on the job, however, he fell off a set of scaffolding, breaking an arm and hip. He was hospitalized and cared for by the Mayo brothers and the Sisters of Saint Francis. (Not a bad care team.) The Sisters were determined to have the chapel finished before the decorative artists they'd hired were scheduled to begin their work. Unable to do the work himself, Graves Sr. brought in his son, then-18-year-old Edward Graves Jr., to finish the job... at his direction, of course, from his hospital bed.



Thomas Graves visits the Chapel at Saint Marys Hospital for the first time.

The chapel built by the Graves family still stands as the narthex at the entry to the now-larger Saint Marys chapel, which was built in 1933. And as they talked, Graves told Murphy that the work of his grandfather and great-grandfather "is even more beautiful" than he first imagined.

"I'm speechless, standing here, where they stood, thinking that my great-grandfather and grandfather built this space -- a space that has hopefully provided so much solace and hope to those in need over the past 110 years," Graves said. He told Murphy he got "choked up" after saying a prayer of thanks to both men for "the legacy they created," as well as to the Mayo Brothers and Sisters of Saint Francis "for caring for my forefathers."

Editor's note: John Murphy serves on the Communications Advisory Council. Excerpted from June 25, 2013 issue of Mayo Clinic's publication *In the Loop*. Reprinted with permission.

In Recognition of Sister Mary Brigh - by Sister Tierney Trueman

Renovation of the Mary Brigh Lobby

Thursday, June 27th, Feast of Our Lady of Perpetual Help

It was one of those lovely summer afternoons of which Sister Mary Brigh had written many years before: "Nothing I have ever done could earn the privilege for me of witnessing summer anew each year." Sisters, administrators, staff, volunteers, visitors and patients gathered with John Murphy, public affairs; Dr. Amy Williams, medical director of the Rochester hospitals; Father Jim Kunz, chaplaincy; Mr. Richard Redding, Knutson Construction; Sister Tierney Trueman, Sponsorship Coordinator; and Sister Generose Gervais, to bless the newly renovated Mary Brigh lobby at Saint Marys Hospital. The lovely two-story glass wall on the eastern end of the lobby, invites Brother Sun to enter and fill the large lobby with light and warmth, welcoming the many who come to Saint Marys Hospital for healing and compassionate care.



L to R: Dr. Amy Williams, S. Generose Gervais, S. Tierney Trueman, Fr. Jim Kunz, and Richard Redding. Mr. Redding was given a crucifix by S. Generose. The cross will be imbedded in cement in the new Emergency Department project, which had been the tradition at Mayo Clinic since 1967. That tradition was begun by S. Mary Brigh Cassidy. Photo courtesy Mayo Clinic.

John Murphy introduced the event and Father Jim Kunz welcomed the participants in the name of the Chaplaincy. Dr. Amy Williams provided a snippet of the history that brought Mother Alfred and Dr. W. W. Mayo to begin the incredible journey that is the story of Saint Marys Hospital and Mayo Clinic. She concluded with a paragraph from the book, *A Century of Caring*, written in honor of the centenary of Saint Marys Hospital.

"Yet for all the medical changes, for all of the halls that seem longer than they once did, for all the unfamiliar faces of those who walk the floors, the same spirit that drove Mother Alfred and the Mayos still exists among the people who staff Saint Marys. They still work hard. They smile and laugh with patients, and they take time to counsel and reassure anxious relatives. Comforting words and holding hands are still in vogue at Saint Marys, and it is still common practice to pray for those in danger."

Sister Tierney offered a "Summer Psalm," a poem by Sister Mary Brigh:

*The glory of the sunrise, green springing grass, fresh budding trees;
Willow tree branches that like a fairy fountain spray, ascend and fall in shimmering ecstasy;
The sting of bright rain drops on the cheek, and the fragrance of rain in the air;
The clear still blueness of the sky;
The fluff of downy clouds sailing in lazy squadrons by.
The warm breath that perfumes every gentle breeze;
The song of lark, the glow of flower;
Cardinal trills, fragrance of lilacs, flash of golden wings,
A widening silver crescent of moon, the starlight still.**

Creator God, who breathed this beautiful world into being and who makes your Presence known through the harmony of Nature, remind us that your creative breath is still alive and active in our world today.

A litany prayer included the various elements that delineate the Saint Marys Hospital seal, embedded in the center of the glass wall. This seal was dedicated at the centenary celebration, to all the many employees who had served at Saint Marys Hospital.

Who was this Sister Mary Brigh, for whom this addition was named when it was completed in 1980? In the foreword to the book that contains some of her beautiful poetry, *Gifts of Her Spirit*,

Marianne Hockema describes her:

"...a common person with uncommon capabilities. To whatever position she held, she brought a business acumen that was legendary, though she was quick to dismiss her extraordinary gifts for leadership as ordinary. She approached problems quietly, yet in her calmness was a steely resolve. To those closest to her, she shared a droll sense of humor, tinged at times with a bit of whimsy. Above all, she had a deep and abiding love for Saint Marys Hospital, its patients and staff. She simply said, 'Saint Marys became part of me.'" *

*Excerpts from *Gifts of Her Spirit*, ARTPACKS, 2008.

Assisi Heights: A Place of Peace and Reflection... by Sister Eleanor Granger

Turning into the entrance of the Assisi Heights drive, one encounters beauty in all seasons. Now, in summer, we witness, the luscious green of the trees, wind waving the green grass, bountiful flowers of radiant colors and a feeling of arriving at a place where so many of our guests say they feel an immediate sense of peace.

Assisi Heights and its grounds serve as home base for 234 Sisters of Saint Francis of Rochester, MN, and a residence to 115 of those Sisters. It is a place of generous service to others given by Sisters and our lay staff of 100 women and men. In addition, we welcome over a 1000 visitors in the course of a year.

"Peacefulness" is the word we hear after our visitors travel the winding hill, view the vast area of grasses, trees, flowers and statuary as they enter Assisi Heights. A warm welcome greets visitors as they walk the halls, meet the Sisters and pray in our beautiful Chapel of Our Lady of Lourdes.

Pam Captain, a dear friend and Rochester Franciscan Cojourner [one who journeys with the Sisters of Saint Francis in a special way] describes it this way:

"An overwhelming sense of relief begins as soon as one passes through the gates at Assisi Heights. You can immediately feel the peace, love and sanctuary that emanates from the Sisters throughout the building and onto the grounds. It is as if one has truly "come home." The Sisters and Assisi Heights are truly an island of peace in the middle of an overly hectic world.

Another Cojourner, Margie Dretsch, who has made the trip "up the hill" for 14 years shares the following with us about peace in Our Lady of Lourdes Chapel at Assisi Heights:

"What it is about is the peace and source of God's unconditional love I feel before the cross on the altar in the main chapel. It is there that God comforts me in my hours of darkness and joy, holding me in His embrace and whispers, "All is and will be well, for I am with you always. You are My precious child and you are in MY care."

"The peace I feel, is the peace only our Christ can give. I am on holy ground as I kneel before the crucifix, there in Lourdes Chapel. I hear the voice of Jesus and feel and know Christ's love."

This God of all Creation, indeed, resides in the various Chapels where our Sisters pray daily at Assisi Heights, and in the beauty of our grounds. A frequent scene is that of Sister Mary Goergen as she sows "peace" on the land, in the gardens, and in the cloistered inner court.

For the last 18 years, Sister Mary Goergen has blessed us with her service as our seasonal gardener, giving generously of her love of God's creation. S. Mary says "our grounds of Assisi Heights are at peace since our earth is blessed with no fracking, no mining and no disturbances." During the season of planting, she can be seen in the coolness of the early morning, as well as the heat of the afternoon, beautifying the land with flowers and grasses, as you see her in the circle where the statue of St. Francis and the wolf stand watch.



At other hours of the day, S. Mary can be found along the outer parts of the south hill and beautifying the road along 14th Street and Assisi Heights Drive. With loving care and precision, she beautifies, plants, weeds, and waters the flowering areas to make sure that this place is ready for all who visit the area for prayer and contemplation. As she reflected, she revealed a precious truth, "the human is the part of creation that can remember, reflect, stand in awe and help the earth be conscious of itself and its beauty." We are thankful for S. Mary, because she inspires us in her understanding that she works with, and in the presence of, God. Through her work, she helps bring peace to the hearts of those who admire the beauty of the gardens at Assisi Heights.

Ministries of Peace

If you are interested in how you can support our various ministries, please feel free to contact:

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